

ai and said reference voice playback step outputs a user selected reference voice of a user selected sentence and pronunciation fluency level and outputs the reference voice based on said reference pronunciation data corresponding to the selected pronunciation fluency level until said similarity determination step detects agreement of both data.

11. (original) The recording medium according to claim 7, wherein said program causes a computer to execute also a step for displaying a sentence corresponding to the reference pronunciation data.

12. (original) The recording medium according to claim 7, wherein said informing step informs of agreement of both data.

REMARKS

This Amendment is in response to the non-final Office Action mailed June 6, 2003. The Examiner's comments in this Office Action have been carefully considered.

The applicant requests an extension of time of two months to November 6, 2003, and authorizes the U.S. Patent Office to charge the extension fee of \$420.00 to account no. 10-0100.

Claims 1-12 are pending in this application, and claims 1-12 have been rejected by the Examiner. The Examiner has rejected claims 1 through 12 as being anticipated and therefore unpatentable in view of Shpiro et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,487,671).

After reviewing the Examiner's comments, claims 2 and 8 of this application have been canceled without prejudice, and claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 9 and 10 have been amended to clarify the subject invention and distinguish it more clearly over the prior art. In view of these amendments and the arguments below, applicant respectfully traverses the rejections of the claims and requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the present anticipation rejections on the basis of the prior art.

More specifically, claims 1 and 7 have been amended to substantially

incorporate the subject matter of canceled claims 2 and 8, respectively.

Each of the canceled claims and, therefore, now amended claims 1 and 7, including the feature that the database stores a plurality of reference pronunciation data corresponding to a pronunciation fluency level, for the same language. This is now, therefore, a requirement of both amended independent claims 1 and 7.

In rejecting claims 2 and 8, the Examiner states that Shpiro et al. teaches a device wherein the database stores a plurality of reference pronunciation data corresponding to a pronunciation fluency level, for the same language (col. 5, line 61, to col. 6, line 4). However, the reference does not teach a plurality of reference pronunciation data corresponding to a pronunciation fluency level, for the same language. Student response scores may be computed may be computed by evaluating student responses in terms of speaker-independent references such as a set of speaker-independent parameters stored in a speaker-independent

parameter database 170. The speaker-independent parameters stored are specific as to age, gender and/or dialect of the speaker (col. 6, line 1).

As per claims 5 and 11, the Examiner states that Shpiro et al. teaches further comprising means for displaying a sentence corresponding to the reference pronunciation data (col. 7, line 61, to col. 8, line 26). However, the reference does not display a sentence corresponding to the reference pronunciation data. Fig. 4 shows a setup of the reference audio specimen library 120 in which no text information is displayed. The reference displays only the waveform of the reference audio specimen (step 420) and the similarity score (step 510).

In view of the foregoing, it is clear that Shpiro fails to teach the subject matter now clearly recited in amended claims 1 and 7. According, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejection on the basis of this reference, reconsider the rejection and withdraw the same.

U.S. Patent Application of Kojima
Serial No.: 09/856,393 – Art Unit: 2654

This application now appears to be in condition for allowance. Early allowance and issuance is, accordingly, respectfully solicited.

Applicant hereby petitions that any and all extensions of time of the term necessary to render this response timely be granted. COSTS FOR SUCH EXTENSION(S) AND/OR ANY OTHER FEE DUE WITH THIS FEE DUE WITH THIS PAPER THAT ARE NOT FULLY COVERED BY AN ENCLOSED CHECK MAY BE CHARGED TO DEPOSIT ACCOUNT #10-0100.

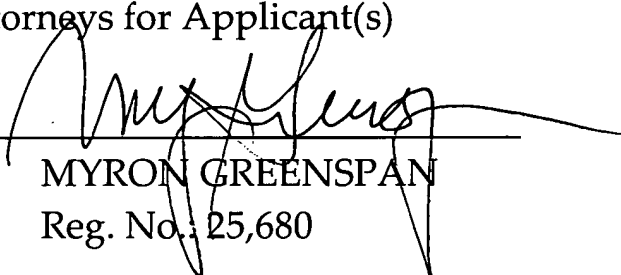
Date: November 6, 2003

Respectfully submitted,

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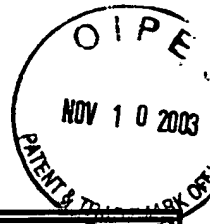
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U.S. Patent Application of Kojima
Serial No.: 09/856,393 – Art Unit: 2654



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